REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are now in the application. By this Response, claim 9 has been amended. Support for the amendment to claim 9 is found at least at page 15, lines 9-29, at page 16, lines 25-32, and at page 16, lines 35-40, of Applicants' disclosure. Claims 1-8, 10, 11, and 13-20 have been withdrawn by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request that claims 10 and 11 be rejoined upon the allowance of claims 9 and 12. Claims 1-8, 11, and 13-20 may be canceled upon the allowance of claims 9 and 12. No new matter has been added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Havlin to Applicants' representative during the April 20, 2010 telephone interview. The following remarks constitute Applicants' separate statement of the Substance of Interview.

Claims 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification is not considered to enable a skilled artisan to prepare an ionic liquid within the entire scope of substituents R' and R" of the anion [BR'n(OR'')m$^-$].

Independent claim 9 is herewith amended to recite the specific substituents encompassed by C_1-C_{18}-alkyl, C_6-C_{12}-aryl, and C_5-C_{12}-cycloalkyl. Applicants respectfully submit that the specification is enabling for at least the narrower scope of amended claim 9.

Further, as discussed during the April 20 interview the specification contains the synthesis for EMIM acetate and butyl-methyl-imidazolium (BMIM) acetate, which can be used as starting materials for a variety of ionic liquids. Moreover, it is one of the advantages of withdrawn process claims 1-8 and 13-20, to provide a generally applicable synthetic route to drastically reduce the amount of impurities in the preparation of a wide variety of ionic liquids.

Without limiting the general applicability of the claimed subject matter, Applicants' disclosure provides, at page 8, lines 8-25, suitable solvents for the preparation of the ionic liquids, at page 8, lines 37-40, that barium hydroxide is particularly preferred when ionic liquids which contain a sulfate anion or hydrogensulfate anion are used as starting material, and at page 9, lines 1-11, suitable synthesis conditions, such as temperatures and durations.

Moreover, as noted at page 9, lines 29-31, the claimed subject matter is directed at ionic liquids derived from strongly basic ionic liquids which are obtained by neutralization with an acid $[H^+]_n[A]^{n-}$ by acids having a pK_S which is lower than that of the corresponding acids of the anion $[X]^{n-}$.

Thus, the guidance provided by Applicants' disclosure extends far beyond the specific examples provided therein.

Claims 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, because dihydrogenborate is not considered to be within the scope of current claim 9.

Applicants appreciate Examiner Havlin's statement provided during the April 20 interview that alternative species may be considered subsequent to the filing of a RCE. Applicants' respectfully request that the species described at page 15, lines 4-5, i.e., $[BPh_3OR']$ as anion and N,N-dialkylimidazolium cation with ethyl and methyl as dialkyl groups be considered. Further, Applicants respectfully request to rejoin withdrawn claims 10 and 11.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 13156-00067-US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: June 29, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Georg M. Hasselmann/
Georg M. Hasselmann
Registration No.: 62,324
CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP
1875 Eye Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 331-7111
(202) 293-6229 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicant